

May 7, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

3932 '99 MAY 19 P3:14

Dear Madam or Sir:

I am writing in response to Docket #98N-1038, "Irradiation in the production, processing and handling of food". I request that it be mandatory that all irradiated food sold in this country be labeled with the terms "irradiated" or "irradiation" and the radura symbol. I strongly believe that it is my right as a consumer to know when food that I am buying has been treated by this potentially dangerous process.

While much about the safety of consuming irradiated food is still unknown, some research to date has already indicated various problems with irradiation. For example, some foods may lose up to 20% of their vitamins and irradiated fats may become rancid. Many studies rejected by the FDA in making a decision about irradiation labeling revealed that subject animals experienced increased tumors, reproductive failures and kidney damage in response to irradiated foods. A study in India found chromosomal abnormalities in children fed freshly irradiated wheat. The FDA's own study showed that the production of fungal aflatoxins, which are very serious carcinogens, is stimulated one hundred fold when grains and vegetables infected by fungal spores are irradiated. In addition, irradiation may create free radicals, which may react with other food components, creating radiolytic products, some of which are known carcinogens (benzene, formaldehyde, lipid peroxides).

In view of these and other studies, it seems highly inappropriate and unwise not to inform the public when they are purchasing irradiated foods. Due to the importance of this issue, I also strongly urge you to extend the comment period beyond May 18.

Thank you very much for considering my views.

Sincerely,

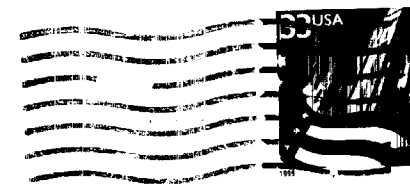
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